A HUNDRED YEARS FROM NOW.

There's a picture in the window
Of a little shop I know,
With boys and girls dressed as they were
A hundred years ago.
And since I saw it, I have thought,
And keep on thinking how
The children, maybe, will be dressed
A hundred years from now.

Will girls wear caps or farthingales,
Or hoops in grand array?
Will they wear bows like butterflies,
Just as they do today?
Will boys wear jackets short, or tie
Their hair in queues? Just how
They'll really look, I'd like to know—
A hundred years from now.

What do you think the girls and boys
Will eat in those far days?
Will they be fed on breakfast foods
In many sorts of ways?
Will all the good and tasty things
Be worse for them than rice?
Will ice-cream soda make them sick,
And everything that's nice?

Will children's books have pictures then,
Or just all reading be?
Perhaps they'll be hand-painted and
Most beautiful to see,
But when I think of those I have,
I truly don't see how
They can be any prettier
A hundred years from now.
—Sarah Noble-Ives in St. Nicholas.

Their Mountain Visitors

By Franklin Welles Calkins

Only occasionally are families honored with such confidence—such terrible confidence—by their visitors as were my friends, the Crawfords, in their mountain home near the Chihuahua boundary.

Stephen Crawford had owned a sugar plantation—bought after the war—in southern Louisiana, where he lived until malarial fevers reduced him to little more than a skeleton.

His physician ordered him to the Southwest, and a brother who had owned a cattle-ranch near the Rio Grande was able to furnish just the domicile at just the altitude needed. His abandoned and roomy log ranch, girt by chaparral-grown arroyos and backed by ledges of painted rock, stood overlooking the Mexican village of Oraibe.

Mr. Crawford's family was small, consisting of a grown daughter, Eunice, two little girls, Essie and Pearl, and an old domestic, of pure Sudanese extraction, known as Aunt Silver.

Eunice, the housekeeper, found her new quarters spacious enough except for lack of bedroom. She managed to overcome this difficulty, however, by having two partitions put up in a large bunk-room, and by furnishing an outside storage-room, which adjoined and opened into the bunk-room. This became the bedroom for the little girls.

It had no window except a square hole at the back, where the logs had been sawed, well up toward the gable, and through which it received some light and ventilation. Planning to have windows in this room as soon as sash and lights could be secured, Eunice covered the opening with mosquito-netting, which was quite covering enough at any season in that climate. The door from her own apartment opened into that of the children, and thus she was able to keep their room aired.

Some months passed, and the frosts of November came to the mountains, giving the nights and mornings a chill which is felt by all outdoor creatures in that latitude.

Thus it was that Eunice and her father had no particular surprise when Essie and Pearl complained that "Old Guy" had come in at their window and insisted upon sleeping on their bed.

Old Guy was a deaf and superannuated hound. A kennel had been fashioned outside for him, since he had been a privileged member of the family. As the outer end of the little girls' apartment abutted against some high rocks, there was nothing but the mosquito-bar to prevent his jumping into their room. And as the mosquito-netting was found to have been torn away, the story told by the children was confirmed.

A cold wind had blown all night, making the house somewhat chilly inside, and the little girls complained that Old Guy had scratched the bedclothes off them to make a nest for himself.

"And he jammed his old cold nose right into my face," said Essie, "and he lay on Pearl and nearly smothered her."

Mr. Crawford laughed. "Old Guy mustn't plague my little girls that way," he said. "You must call to your sister; and, Eunice, keep your riding-whip in your room, and if you catch the hound in there give him a few cuts and drive him out, and he won't go in again.

That day the invalid, who was already on the way to recovery, drove to Oraibe; but as the road was long and rough, his strength did not permit him to return that night, as he had planned.

Eunice, expecting her father to come home, sat up until nearly midnight, in order to prepare a warm supper for him upon his arrival. She busied herself writing letters in her room.

At about eleven o'clock, as she sat writing, she heard a scratching sound from the children's room, followed by a muffled jar, as if some creature had leaped upon the floor.

Eunice listened in silence until she heard the voice of little Pearl in a sleepy, whimpering complaint.

"Poor dears!" thought the elder sister. "That old nuisance of a Guy really deserves to be punished for bothering them so." She rose softly and got her rawhide riding-whip, intending, tender-hearted though she was, to flick the old hound hard enough to make him remember.

She heard a repetition of the scratching sounds, and again that muffled thud upon the floor, and in the same instant, again the sleepy, half-smothered wail of little Pearl. A chill struck to her very heart as the situation dawned upon her. There were wild creatures of some sort in the room. Old Guy had not been on their bed.

Lynxes, mountain-lions and bears were among the hills, and any of them, coming in easily from the rocks, might long have used that room for their lair! How careless, how criminally careless she had been, to leave that opening unbarred!

In the agony of self-condemnation, she did not stop to consider that all in the house had slept with wide-open windows month after month.

While Eunice stood, uncertain whether or not to go for her father's gun and arouse Aunt Silver and Old Guy, a third smothered wail appealed to her. She hesitated no longer, but threw the door open and stepped into the room.

She held her lamp above her head, and the sight, no longer unexpected, which met her eyes was certainly horrifying. Near the center of the room stood a great, mottled beast, its head raised, its big eyes reflecting her light, its fangs bared in a hiss of surprise, which deepened immediately to a thunderous chest growl—unmistakably a deep mutter of warning against the intruder.

Then, even more terrifying sight, upon the children's bed another creature of the same sort upreared itself. Half-roused and reclining upon its haunches, this one gave vent to a series of gruff outcries which resembled the coughing grunts of a sea-lion.

Greatly to the relief of Eunice, Essie, who occupied the front of the bed, now leaped out and scudded from the room. But little Pearl, under her quilts, was held by one fore paw of the beast upon her bed, and the poor innocent wailed in piteous affright.

In the instant that she stood, transfixed with terror and irresolute, Eunice recognized that these big, mottled cats were Mexican tigers, or jaguars. The beasts had without doubt had their winter lair in the long-vacant and easily accessible storage-room, and the chill nights had driven them back to it. Their natural prey was abundant in the mountains, and there had been no incentive to attack the sleeping children.

But now they had been angered, and Eunice dared not for an instant leave the crying child to their mercy. She knew that most wild animals are fearful of fire, and she trusted much to the lamp in her hand to keep the jaguars at bay.

"Stop crying, Pearl," she commanded, sternly, "and sister will drive that old dog away!"

Holding her lamp to the front and with whip drawn to strike, she approached the beast upon the bed. Her caution might have been greater had she known what Mexicans could have told her, that the jaguar is frequently fascinated by a moving light, and will as often follow one as retreat from it.

The animal did not indeed change its position as she drew nearer, but rather increased the violence of its grunting roars. Its great red maw and formidable fangs would certainly have frightened away a less resolute girl.

As she came up to the bed, Eunice set her teeth and struck the jaguar a vicious cut upon its jaws. The animal, roaring with pain and anger, shrank against the wall, but retreated no farther, and its fore paw still held the little girl. All wild beasts of the fiercer sort are tenacious of foothold in their lairs.

Eunice now leaned forward and plied her whip with the practised hand of a horsewoman. Her stinging cuts were aimed at the animal's eyes. Flesh and blood could not long endure such punishment, and presently, with a horse whine, the jaguar leaped off the foot of the bed.

Eunice snatched the crying child from under its quilts and backed away to the door, bidding Pearl to run out behind her.

Despite her retreat, the jaguars would now have leaped outside, but a new attack seemed to threaten them. Their increasing uproar had aroused Aunt Silver and the old hound. The negress had fled from the house and climbed upon a mountain cart, where she now stood, shrieking incoherently. Just as Eunice reached the door Guy thrust his muzzle in at the opposite opening. The hound stood with his hind feet upon the rocks outside, and seeing the jaguars, gave tongue in a deafening clamor.

The jaguars, beset on all sides with strange creatures and stranger noises, apparently became as thoroughly frightened as before they had been angry and formidable. Such instances of their terror at a really slight cause are not infrequent in hunters' annals.

Eunice paused, fascinated, in the doorway to watch the strange antics of these jungle beasts. The jaguars had thrown themselves upon the floor in the center of the room, where, bewildered by the bedlam of noises and the light, they rolled and writhed and bounced, spitting and snarling, and apparently trying to face all ways at once.

What with the wailings of Aunt Silver, the bellowing of the hound and the cries of the children, who imagined that Eunice was being eaten, there was noise enough to have thrown a menagerie of wild beasts into terror and confusion.

Eunice watched the jaguars for some seconds, noting their fear, and debating how best to get rid of them; and then, with resolution taken, she stepped back and closed the door upon them. For a brief time she busied herself in quieting Essie and Pearl; then she locked them safely within the sitting-room, got her father's repeating carbine and returned.

She drew a chair to the door, set her lamp upon it, opened the door, and pushed her light forward so as to illuminate most of the space within the storeroom.

At first she could see nothing of the jaguars, but their snarling voices indicated their hiding-place. Both, intimidated by the howlings of the hound and Aunt Silver, had taken refuge under the high, old-fashioned bed, where they lay flattened upon the floor, seeming to feel at last tolerably secure.

They hissed, spat and growled occasionally, but only in the warning, familiar fashion of common cats.

Eunice sat down upon the door-sill to obtain steadiness of aim. One head could be seen under the foot-rail of the bed, and at this Eunice fired, fortunately killing the jaguar instantly.

Terrified by the shot, the other broke cover and leaped to a far corner of the room. Then, while the hound bellowed encouragement, the brave girl aimed and fired at the bouncing, snarling beast until the smoke of her carbine filled the room.

Then she beat a hasty retreat and locked her door upon the danger. Not until she heard toothless Old Guy worrying at the carcasses of the jaguars did she realize that victory was hers.

Mr. Crawford was a proud father when he returned from Oraibe. The skins of the jaguars—one with six bullet-holes—are yet proudly exhibited at his ranch in Presidio County.
—Youth's Companion.

RUSSIAN VILLAGE FIRES.

Edict by Which a Governor Hoped to End Loss of Life and Property.

The present is the season of village conflagrations which annually destroy thousands of the peasants' wooden houses, and besides ruining whole communities involve no small loss of fire.

Given the intense heat which renders the wooden hovels inflammable as touch-wood at the end of the summer, and the inevitable custom of every village that the ablebodied of both sexes spend all the hours of daylight in the fields gatherings in the harvest, it would seem that nothing can be done to put an end to this terrible scourge.

Children and the helpless aged are locked up or locked out, as the case may be, for the entire day, and are left to shift for themselves. If one hovel takes fire nothing can save the whole village. The zemstvos have been fighting for a generation with this danger by the rational method of assisting peasants to roof their hovels with iron instead of straw, establish fire brigades, etc., but the process is a slow one.

Much amusement is being caused by an administrative attempt to deal with the evil in the good old way. The Governor of Poltava has issued a fiat that any peasant leaving children without supervision shall be fined £30 (which is thrice the average amount of annual taxation, collected with so much difficulty from an impoverished class!) or be imprisoned for three months.

The "administrative order," issued under the provisions of martial law, is typical of much that is being done by incompetent provincial governors without the sanction and too frequently without the knowledge of their central organs of government. As is pointed out, if no fire occurs not one case in 10,000 of children being left alone at home will ever come to light, and in any case the harvest must be garnered, and can only be garnered by every ablebodied man and woman working sixteen and eighteen hours a day in the fields, which may be anything from one mile to ten miles away from their homes.—St. Petersburg correspondence London Standard.